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CASPER™ AND THE SPECTRALS

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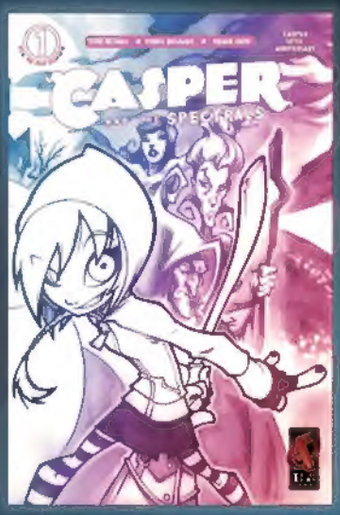
CASPER THE FRIENDLY GHOST
60TH ANNIVERSARY

COVER A (REG)

COVER B (1:15)

COVER C (1:25)



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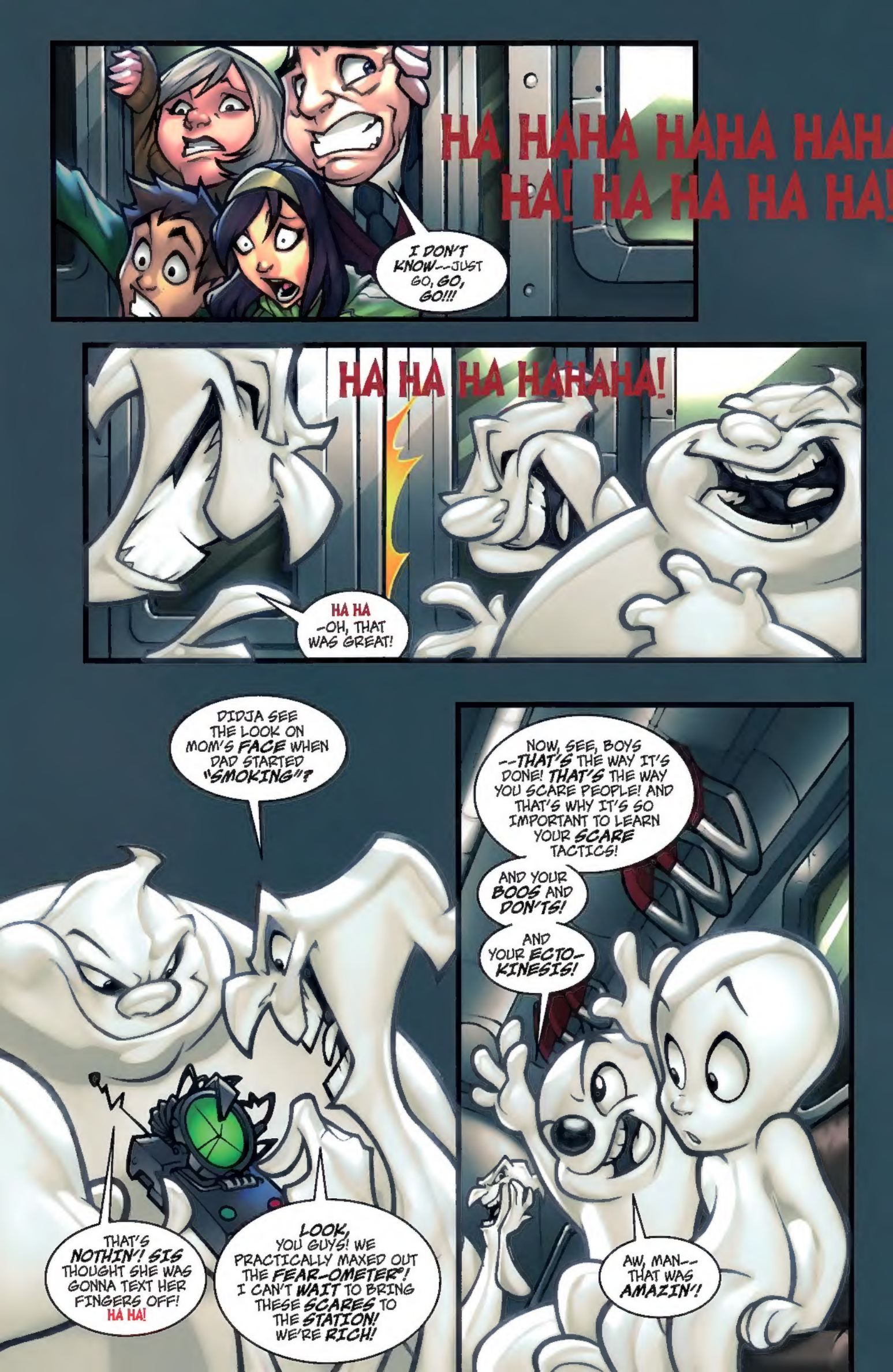
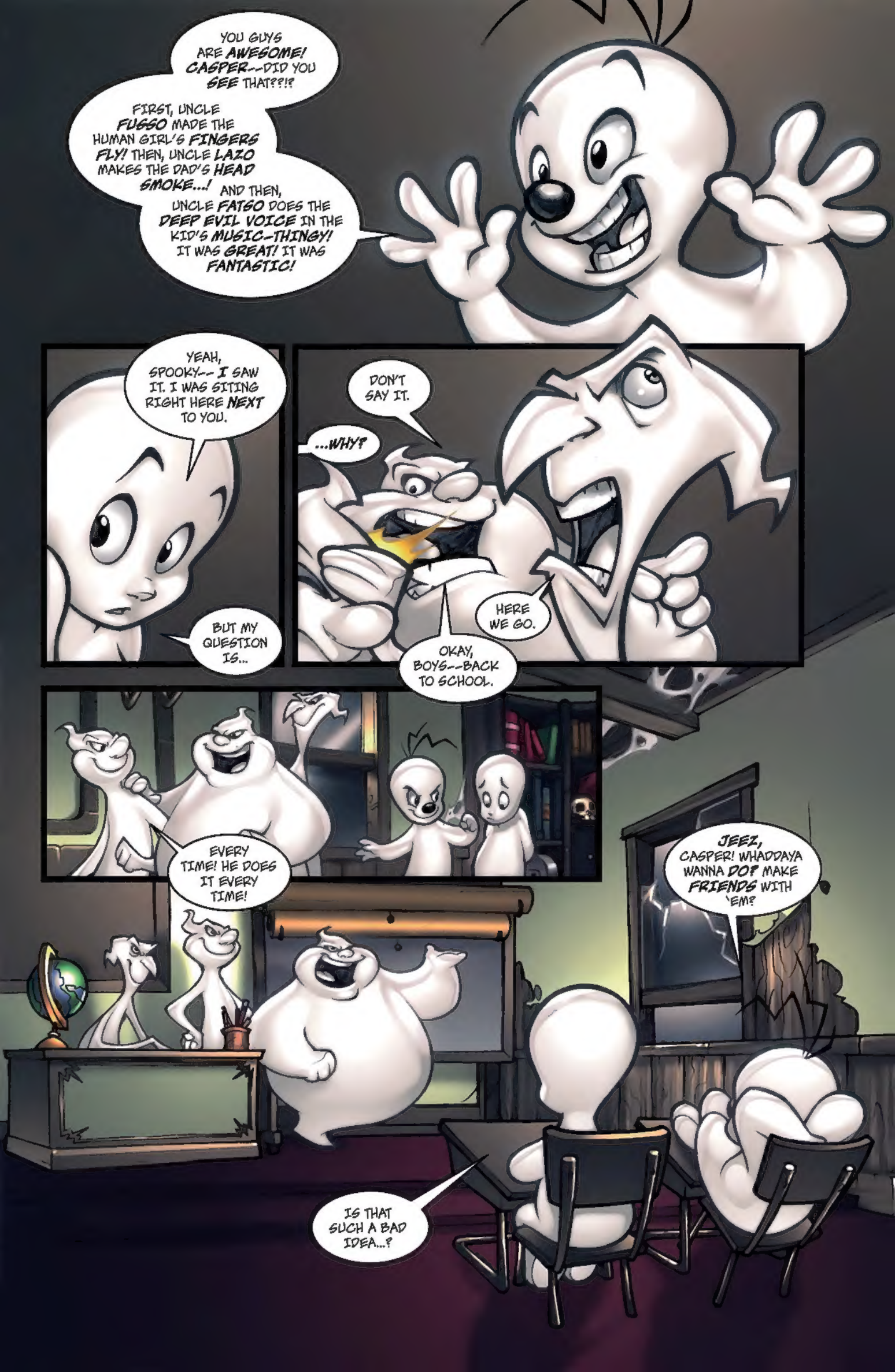
CASPER
AND THE SPECTRALS
NEW YORK CITY.
THE BIG APPLE. THE GREATEST CITY IN THE WORLD.
THE CITY THAT NEVER SLEEPS.
NEVER SLEEPS..BUT SOMETIMES IT DOES GET "SLEEPY"...
AS THE HOUR GROWS LATE, THE STREETS GROW QUIET...
...THE SUBWAY STATIONS ARE ALL BUT ABANDONED...
AND SO IT IS THAT THE EDWARDS FAMILY FINDS THEMSELVES ALONE IN AN UNCHARACTERISTICALLY EMPTY SUBWAY CAR AS THEY TREK HOME AFTER A LATE-ENDING BROADWAY SHOW.

AT LEAST, IT APPEARS EMPTY...
?!
MOM? MY FINGERS...I CAN'T STOP MY–
YOUR ALL DOOMED.
YOUR ALL DOOMED.
YOUR ALL DOOMED. –
MOM?! DAD?! DAAAAAD!!??
MARVIN. ANSWER YOUR DAUGHTER.
MARVIN, I SAID–
MARVIN??! WHAT–
HMMM?
MARVIN! MARVIN, YOU'RE... YOU'RE...
– SMOKING!

YOU'RE ALL DOOMED. YOU'RE ALL DOOMED. YOU'RE ALL DOOMED. YOU'RE ALL_
HUH?!
WHAT?!?!
MOM! DAD! WHAT'S GOING ONNNN?!
AAAAHHHHHHHH!!!


HA HAHA HAHA HAHA
HA! HA HA HA HA!
I DON'T KNOW--JUST GO, GO, GO!!!
HA HA HA HAHAHA!
HA HA
-OH, THAT WAS GREAT!
DIDJA SEE THE LOOK ON MOM'S FACE WHEN DAD STARTED "SMOKING"?
THAT'S NOTHIN'! SIS THOUGHT SHE WAS GONNA TEXT HER FINGERS OFF! HA HA!
LOOK, YOU GUYS! WE PRACTICALLY MAXED OUT THE FEAR-OMETER®! I CAN'T WAIT TO BRING THESE SCARES TO THE STATION! WE'RE RICH!
NOW, SEE, BOYS --THAT'S THE WAY IT'S DONE! THAT'S THE WAY YOU SCARE PEOPLE! AND THAT'S WHY IT'S SO IMPORTANT TO LEARN YOUR SCARE TACTICS!
AND YOUR BOOS AND DON'TS!
AND YOUR ECTO-KINESIS!
AW, MAN-- THAT WAS AMAZIN'!


YOU GUYS ARE AWESOME! CASPER--DID YOU SEE THAT??!?
FIRST, UNCLE FUGSO MADE THE HUMAN GIRL'S FINGERS FLY! THEN, UNCLE LAZO MAKES THE DAD'S HEAD SMOKE...! AND THEN, UNCLE FATSO DOES THE DEEP EVIL VOICE IN THE KID'S MUSIC-THINGY! IT WAS GREAT! IT WAS FANTASTIC!
YEAH, SPOOKY-- I SAW IT. I WAS SITING RIGHT HERE NEXT TO YOU.
BUT MY QUESTION IS...
DON'T SAY IT.
...WHY?
HERE WE GO.
OKAY, BOYS--BACK TO SCHOOL.
EVERY TIME! HE DOES IT EVERY TIME!
JEEZ, CASPER! WHADDAYA WANNA DO? MAKE FRIENDS WITH 'EM?
IS THAT SUCH A BAD IDEA...?

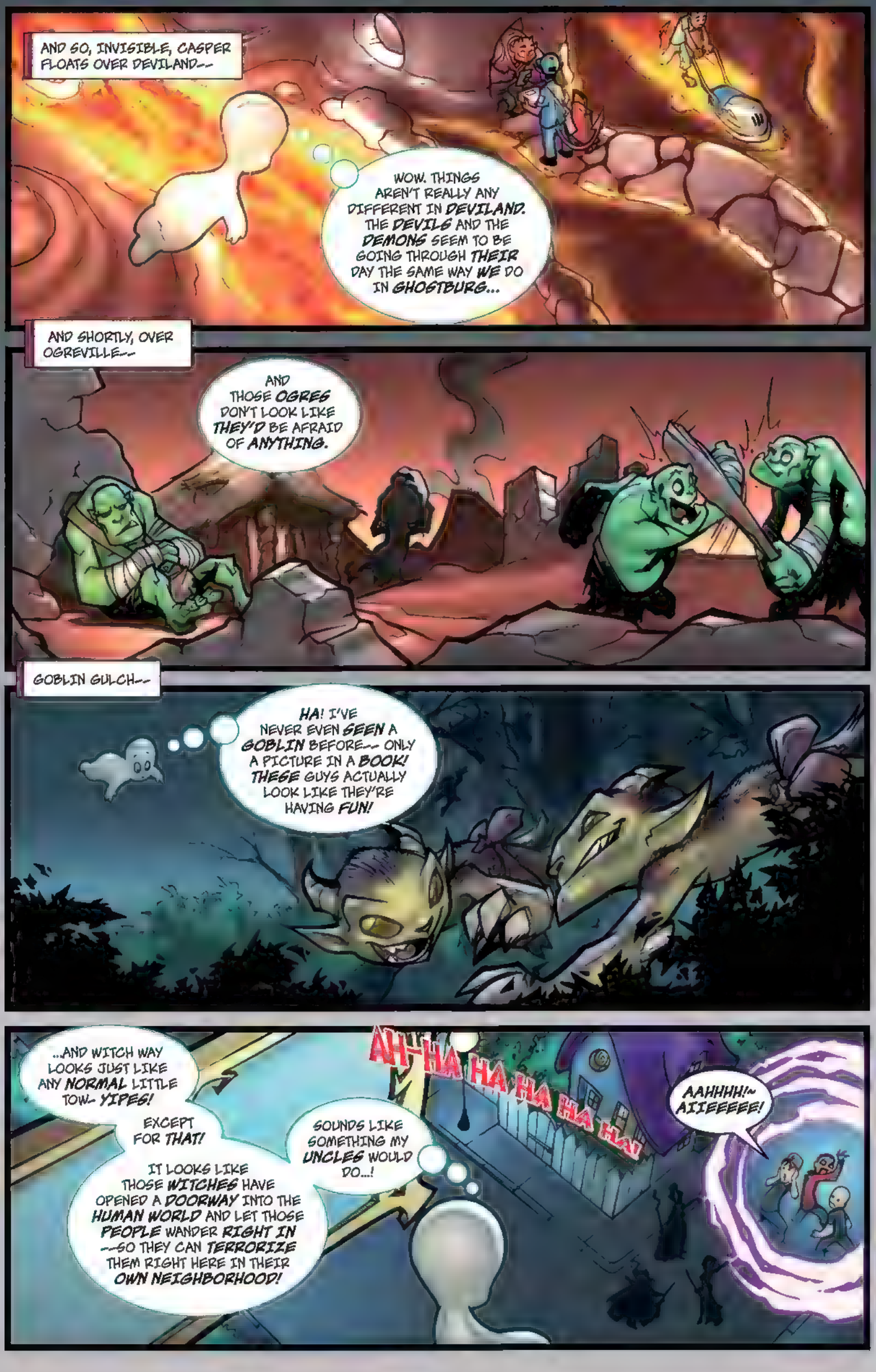
YOU'RE DOOMED! YOU'RE DOOMED!
AND DO YOU KNOW THAT YOU SPELLED "YOU'RE" WRONG ON THE GIRL'S CELL PHONE? IT'S "YOU ARE"... "YOU'RE." Y-O-U-R IS THE POSSESSIVE.
PLUS, I JUST DON'T GET WHY WE HAVE TO SCARE THEM...
GAHHH! GIVE ME STRENGTH!
CASPER, WE'VE TOLD YOU A THOUSAND HUNDRED TIMES -- WE SCARE THE HUMANS TO KEEP GHOSTBURG INTACT! TO KEEP ALL OF SPOOKY TOWN FROM BEING DESTROYED!
TO KEEP VOLBRAGG FROM EVER GETTING OUT!!
VOLBRAGG ISN'T A MYTH, CASPER. THIS ISN'T FOLKLORE-- IT'S HISTORY! NOW PAY ATTENTION--BOTH OF YOU!--
BUT WE DON'T EVEN KNOW IF THERE REALLY IS A VOLBRAGG. WHAT IF HE'S JUST A MYTH?
WHA_?!
KID'S CRAZY.

-- 'CAUSE WE'RE ONLY GONNA DO THIS ONE MORE TIME!
BACK IN THE 1600S, WHEN THE UNITED STATES WAS JUST GETTIN' STARTED, NEW YORK CITY WASN'T EVEN CALLED NEW YORK CITY YET. IT WAS CALLED NEW AMSTERDAM, 'CAUSE THE FOLKS THAT WERE SETTLING THERE WERE DUTCH.
ONE OF THE GUYS THAT STUCK OUT LIKE A SORE THUMB BACK THEN WAS A GUY NAMED WILLEM GEORGES VOLBRAGG AND HE WAS WHAT THEY CALLED BACK IN THOSE DAYS... "A BIG JERK."
NOW THE ONE THING THAT VOLBRAGG WANTED MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE IN THE WORLD WAS POWER. HE WANTED TO BE THE MAYOR OR THE GOVERNOR OR SOMETHING SO THAT HE COULD RULE THE PEOPLE.
MAYBE HE THOUGHT THAT THEY WOULD LIKE HIM THEN OR SOMETHING...
BUT NOBODY LIKED VOLBRAGG. HE WAS MEAN AND NASTY AND HE TRIED TO BULLY AND INTIMIDATE PEOPLE INTO VOTING FOR HIM--BUT THEY WOULDN'T EVEN NOMINATE HIM!
HE WAS ANGRY ALL THE TIME.
FINALLY, THE TOWNSPEOPLE GOT TIRED OF HIS VIOLENCE AND BRUTALIZING...
...AND THEY TOOK MATTERS INTO THEIR OWN HANDS.
THEY HAD VOLBRAGG "TAKEN CARE OF"...
...AND SUNK TO THE BOTTOM OF THE RIVER!

BUT KILLING VOLBRAGG ONLY MADE HIM MADDER--
--AND CRAZIER!
SO WHEN HE ARRIVED HERE IN SPOOKY TOWN--BACK THEN IT WAS CALLED SPOOKY TOWNE, WITH AN "E" 'CAUSE THAT'S THE WAY THE DUTCH LIKED IT--
--VOLBRAGG DECIDED THAT, IF HE COULDN'T RULE IN NEW AMSTERDAM IN THE REAL WORLD, HE SURE AS HECK WAS GONNA RULE SPOOKY TOWN HERE IN THE GHOST WORLD!
VOLBRAGG WASN'T GONNA LET THIS SECOND OPPORTUNITY PASS HIM BY.
HE ENLISTED THE AIDE OF AN OLD WITCH THAT HE FOUND ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF WITCH WAY--- A DECREPIT OLD THING THAT EVEN THE OTHER WITCHES HAD SHUNNED...
SHE TAUGHT HIM VARIOUS SPELLS AND MAGICKS THAT HE COULD USE TO MAKE THE POPULACE OF SPOOKY TOWN FEAR HIM AND DO AS HE BID.
HE USED THOSE MAGICKS TO CREATE A SPHERE THAT COLLECTED THE "FRIGHTS" THAT THE GHOSTS SCARED OUT OF THE HUMANS, CONVERTING IT TO ENERGY THAT MADE VOLBRAGG BIGGER, STRONGER...

THEN, HE PITTED EACH GROUP AGAINST EACH OTHER, MAKING THEM ALL COMPETE TO SEE WHICH BOROUGH COULD GATHER THE MOST SCARES...
...THREATENING TO DESTROY THE TOWN THAT BROUGHT IN THE LEAST AMOUNT OF FEAR!
GHOSTBURG AGAINST GOBLIN GULCH! WITCH WAY VERSUS DEVILAND! NO ONE TRUSTED ANYBODY -- AND EVERYBODY FEARED VOLBRAGG!
BUT, SOON, SOME OF THE SMARTER GHOSTS AND WITCHES HAD HAD ENOUGH...
...AND, USING MAGIC, FIGURED OUT A WAY TO TURN VOLBRAGG'S POWER COLLECTOR INTO A SCARE-POWERED PRISON!
THEY CAPTURED HIM IN HIS OWN SPHERE, NOW CHANNELING THE "SCARE ENERGY" TO KEEP HIM CONTAINED AND IN A STATE OF SUSPENDED ANIMATION, NEVER TO AWAKEN...
...AND THAT'S WHY WE GOTTA KEEP THE SCARES COMING. TO BE SURE THAT VOLBRAGG'S PRISON STAYS STRONG AND SECURE.
BUT DO YOU WANNA KNOW ANOTHER REASON WHY WE SCARE PEOPLE, CASPER...?
'CAUSE WE'RE GHOSTS, THAT'S WHY!!
THAT'S WHAT GHOSTS DO!

AND, SHORTLY--
GEE, THEY JUST DON'T WANT TO LISTEN. I'M SURE WE COULD FIND SOME OTHER WAY TO KEEP VOLBRAGG CONTAINED--SOME OTHER ENERGY. THE HUMANS HAVE ALL KINDS OF DIFFERENT POWER SOURCES...
BUT THEY WON'T EVEN TRY. AND THEY'RE TOO DISTRUSTFUL OF ALL THE OTHER GROUPS IN SPOOKY TOWN. WHY, WE'VE ALL BEEN FORBIDDEN TO EVEN LOOK OVER INTO THE OTHER SECTIONS OF THE CITY FOR AS LONG AS I CAN REMEMBER...
BUT I WONDER...
...MAYBE IT'S TIME TO SEE FOR MYSELF. TO SEE IF PEOPLE REALLY ARE THAT DIFFERENT AND IF MAYBE, JUST MAYBE, SOMEONE ELSE THINKS WE COULD DO THINGS DIFFERENTLY TOO.


AND SO, INVISIBLE, CASPER FLOATS OVER DEVILAND--
WOW. THINGS AREN'T REALLY ANY DIFFERENT IN DEVILAND. THE DEVILS AND THE DEMONS SEEM TO BE GOING THROUGH THEIR DAY THE SAME WAY WE DO IN GHOSTBURG...
AND SHORTLY, OVER OGREVILLE--
AND THOSE OGRES DON'T LOOK LIKE THEY'D BE AFRAID OF ANYTHING.
GOBLIN GULCH--
HA! I'VE NEVER EVEN SEEN A GOBLIN BEFORE-- ONLY A PICTURE IN A BOOK! THESE GUYS ACTUALLY LOOK LIKE THEY'RE HAVING FUN!
...AND WITCH WAY LOOKS JUST LIKE ANY NORMAL LITTLE TOW- YIPES!
EXCEPT FOR THAT!
IT LOOKS LIKE THOSE WITCHES HAVE OPENED A DOORWAY INTO THE HUMAN WORLD AND LET THOSE PEOPLE WANDER RIGHT IN --SO THEY CAN TERRORIZE THEM RIGHT HERE IN THEIR OWN NEIGHBORHOOD!
SOUNDS LIKE SOMETHING MY UNCLES WOULD DO...!
AH-HA HA HA HA HA!
AAHHHH!~ AIEEEEEE!

HAHAHAHAHA!
KEEP IT UP, GIRLS--THE FEAR-OMETER IS OFF THE CHARTS!
STOP! STOP IT RIGHT NOW!
HERE WE GO AGAIN...
BUT...WENDY...DEAR... WE...WE WEREN'T DOING ANYTHING WRONG...WE WERE JUST...GIVING THEM DIRECTIONS...THEY WERE LOST, DEAR, AND WE-
THAT'S ENOUGH! YOU CAN STOP NOW! YOU HAVE ENOUGH SCARES IN THERE TO LAST THREE MONTHS! THESE POOR PEOPLE...
MAYBE WE DON'T MAKE YOU PARTICIPATE, LITTLE ONE, BUT THAT DOESN'T GIVE YOU THE RIGHT TO SPOIL OUR FUN!
YOU MAY NOT LIKE THE WAY WE COLLECT OUR SCARES, CHILD, BUT I CAN ASSURE YOU THAT YOU WOULDN'T BE VERY HAPPY WERE THAT MONSTER TO BE FREED AGAIN!
WHATEVER. LET'S JUST GET THESE TERRIFIED TOURISTS HOME--
WHOOOSH!
--AND WE CAN--
WHOOPS! MISSED ONE!
I WAS GOING TO MAKE COOKIES...

THE THREE OF YOU STAY RIGHT HERE! I'M GOING TO GO AFTER THAT KID. BUT WHEN I GET BACK WE'RE GOING TO TALK ABOUT THIS.
I DO UNDERSTAND WHY YOU DO WHAT YOU DO-- SCARING HUMANS KEEPS US SAFE, I GET IT-- I JUST WISH YOU WOULDN'T TAKE SUCH PLEASURE IN IT.
IT'S EMBARRASSING!
WHOOSH!
OKAY, NOW WHERE DID THAT LITTLE HUMAN GO?
AND, NEARBY--
OH BOY-- THAT LITTLE KID IS FRIGHTENED! IF THERE WERE JUST SOME WAY THAT I COULD GET HIM TO GO OUT THERE... I HAVE A FEELING THAT LITTLE WITCH WILL GET HIM BACK HOME.

HIYA. LISTEN, DON'T BE AFRAID. I KNOW IT' SCARY, BUT IF YOU JUST-
A G-G-G-GHOST!!
AAHHHHH!
BINGO!
POOOF!!
WHAT WAS HE RUNNING FROM? DID THAT KID SAY...
OH, I AM SO BUSTED! PLEASE DON'T SEE ME, PLEASE DON'T SEE ME...
STOP! I KNOW YOU'E THERE. COME OUT.
RATS!

I'M...I'M SORRY. I WAS TRYING TO HELP.
OH, NO-- YOU DID HELP! I MEAN, HIS PANTS MAY BE A LITTLE WETTER THAN BEFORE, BUT WE GOT HIM HOME, RIGHT? GOOD JOB, PAL.
WELL, THAT FEELS FUNNY. I NEVER SHOOK HANDS WITH A GHOST BEFORE.
ME NEITHER. I MEAN, I'VE SHAKEN HANDS WITH A GHOST BEFORE, BUT NOT WITH A...A...
...A WITCH. I'M WENDY. WHAT DO THEY CALL YOU?
OTHER THAN "PAIN IN THE ECTOPLASM"..? MY NAME IS CASPER.
CASPER...? HUH--I LIKE THAT.

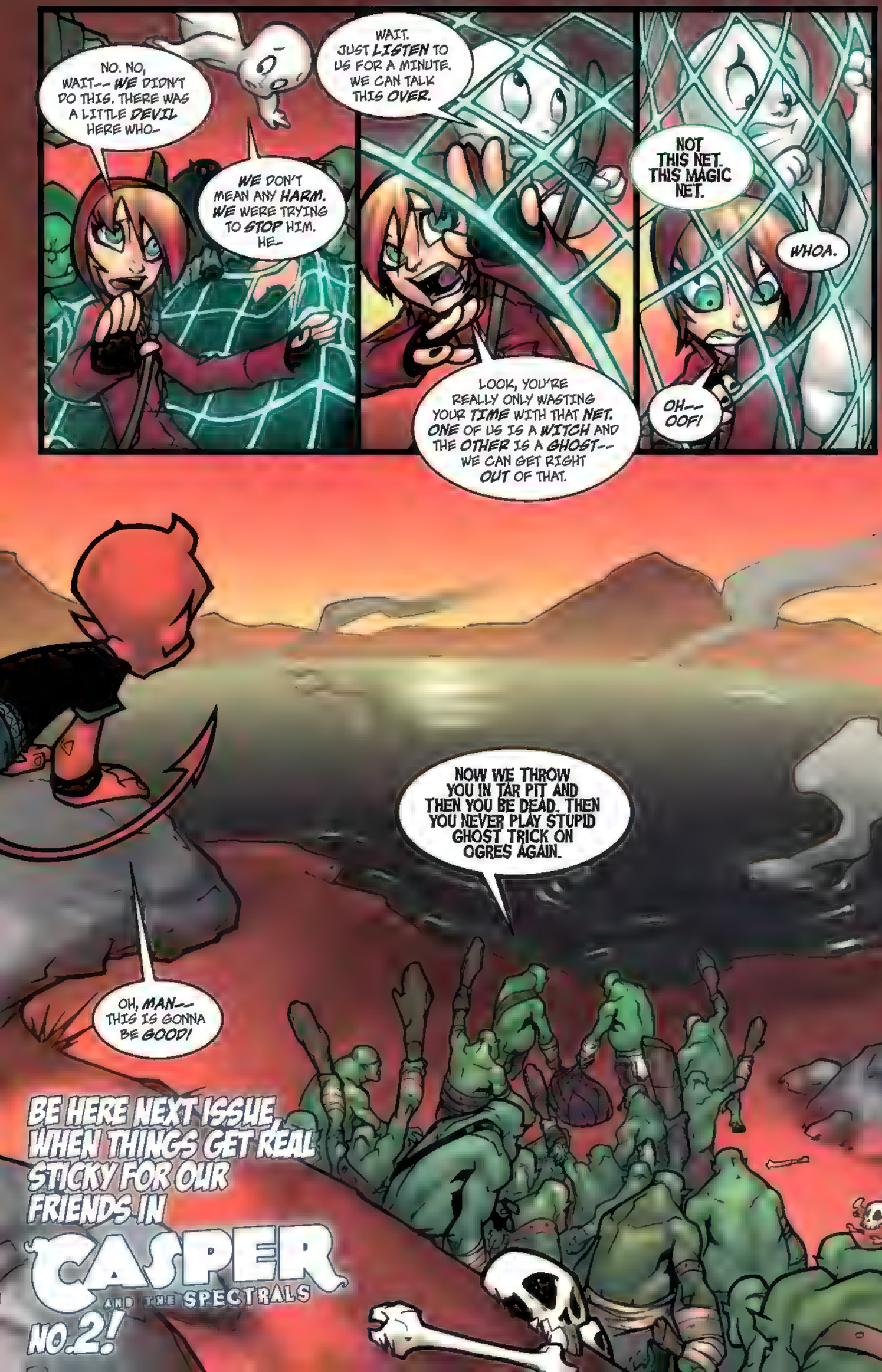
HAVE YOU EVER MET SOMEONE AND JUST..KNEW...?
KNEW THAT THEY WERE GOING TO BE A SPECIAL FRIEND EVEN BEFORE THE DAY WAS THROUGH?
KNEW THAT THEY THOUGHT THE WAY YOU THOUGHT, SAW THINGS THE WAY YOU SAW THEM, EVEN WITHOUT TALKING ABOUT IT.
FINDING OUT WHAT THEY LIKE AND DON'T LIKE, FINDING OUT WHAT THEY CAN DO--
BOTH OF THEM ARE CURIOUS -- ABOUT WHERE THEY LIVE, WHAT THEY'E BEEN TOLD, AND WHY THEY LIVE THE WAY THEY LIVE.
WHY THEY WERE TOLD NOT TO TRUST EACH OTHER...
BUT THEY DO TRUST EACH OTHER -- MORE THAN THEYVE EVER TRUSTED ANYONE BEFORE.
HAVE YOU EVER MET SOMEONE AND WANTED TO SPEND ALL YOUR TIME WITH THEM, WANTED TO LEARN ALL ABOUT THEM...?
MET SOMEONE AND THEIR SMILE...MADE YOUR SOUL CLICK...?
NOT
YOU WILL.
CASPER EDUCATES WENDY ON EVERYTHING HE KNOWS ABOUT THE GHOSTS...
..AND WENDY TEACHES HIM ALL SHE KNOWS ABOUT THE WITCHES.
AND THEN, UNDER A SPELL OF INVISIBILITY, IT'S TIME FOR THEM TO EXPLORE THE OTHER REALMS OF SPOOKY TOWN TOGETHER.
AND SO IT IS THAT, FOR THE REST OF THAT AFTERNOON, AND THE NEXT FEW DAYS, WENDY AND CASPER SPEND ALL THEIR TIME TOGETHER--
-- LAUGHING AND PLAYING AND LEARNING ALL ABOUT ONE ANOTHER.

MEANWHILE, IN DEVILAND...
OH, MAN-- THIS IS GONNA BE AWESOME!!
THIS LAVA PIT RIGHT OUTSIDE THE BACK DOOR IS GENIUS! MY BONE-HEADED BROTHER AND HIS FRIEND WON'T SUSPECT A THING ONCE I COVER IT OVER WITH THIS TARP!
6
COME ON, COME ON-- HURRY UP! HE'S GONNA COME OUT HERE ANY SECOND! AND I STILL GOTTA GET RID OF ANY OF THE EVIDENCE!
THEN I'LL GET BEHIND THE CAMERA...
...AND FILM ALL THE HILARITY FOR DEVILAND'S FUNNIEST HOME VIDEOS!
[O] REC
OBOY! OBOY! HERE THEY COME!
...NO, THEN SHE CALLED ME A HOTTIE. AND I CALLED HER A HOTTIE, AND-
[O] REC
AAAHHHHH!
WHA?!
SPLOOOP!

HOT STUFFFFF!!
THERE HE IS! GET 'M!
UH OH.
YOU ARE DOOMED, HOT STUFF! SO HELP ME, WHEN I CATCH YOU, YOU ARE DOOMED!
I THINK THIS VIDEO'S GONNA WIN THE ¥100,000 DOLLARS...
LATER, AFTER THE OBLIGATORY BEATING--
OOOOOOOOOO
WELL, THAT WAS NO FUN. I DIDN'T MIND GETTIN' POUNDED ON SO MUCH, BUT THEY DIDN'T HAFTA THROW MY CAMERA IN THE PIT. IT'LL BE EASIER TO HAVE SOME FUN WITH THESE OGRES--THEY'RE TOO DUMB TO EVER FIGURE OUT THAT SOMEBODY'S BEHIND IT ANYWAY...
OOOO, LOOK! GHOSTS BREAK RULES--COME OVER TO OGREVILLE!
WE SMASH THEM!
OOOOOOOOOO
COME HERE, GHOST! THOG SMACK YOU!
OH, THIS IS PRICELESS!

OOF!
WHAM!!
OOPS. OG AND KOG GET IN WAY.
WHOMP!!!
UNGH!
OH, THIS IS GREAT! THIS IS EVEN BETTER THAN I THOUGHT IT WAS GONNA BE!! LOOKIT THOSE MAROONS PLAYIN' WHACK-A-MOLE ON EACH OTHER! MAN, I WISH I HAD MY CAMERA!
~ AHEM! ~
WHO-?
WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING?! YOU HAVE THOSE POOR, SIMPLE CREATURES DOWN THERE BEATING EACH OTHER'S BRAINS OUT FOR YOUR AMUSEMENT!!
IT MAY BE A BIG JOKE TO YOU, AND MAYBE IT DOESN'T HURT THEM THE WAY IT WOULD NORMAL PEOPLE, BUT IT'S CRUEL AND IT'S MEAN AND YOU SHOULD BE ASHAMED OF YOURSELF!

I AM. I AM ASHAMED OF MYSELF. I CAN'T DO IT ANY MORE. HERE, YOU TAKE IT.
HUH?
WHAT?
HEY, YOU BIG, STUPID OGRES--OVER HERE!!
SEE YA.
POOF!
OH, NO--I FORGOT--
--DEVILS CAN TELEPORT.
THERE! LOOK! A GHOST AND WITCH!
THEY DO THIS TRICK! GET THEM!


NO. NO, WAIT-- WE DIDN'T DO THIS. THERE WAS A LITTLE DEVIL HERE WHO-
WE DON'T MEAN ANY HARM. WE WERE TRYING TO STOP HIM. HE-
WAIT. JUST LISTEN TO US FOR A MINUTE. WE CAN TALK THIS OVER.
LOOK, YOU'RE REALLY ONLY WASTING YOUR TIME WITH THAT NET. ONE OF US IS A WITCH AND THE OTHER IS A GHOST-- WE CAN GET RIGHT OUT OF THAT.
NOT THIS NET. THIS MAGIC NET.
WHOA.
OH-- OOF!
NOW WE THROW YOU IN TAR PIT AND THEN YOU BE DEAD. THEN YOU NEVER PLAY STUPID GHOST TRICK ON OGRES AGAIN.
OH, MAN-- THIS IS GONNA BE GOOD!
BE HERE NEXT ISSUE, WHEN THINGS GET REAL STICKY FOR OUR FRIENDS IN
CASPER AND THE SPECTRALS
NO.2!

COMING IN 30 DAYS...

ISSUE #2 ON SALE IN NOVEMBER!

CASPER™ AND THE SPECTRALS

I started reading comics at a young age. Obsessively. My brother gave me about 200 comics, which included paperback reprints of the first twenty or so issues of the Stan Lee/Steve Ditko *SPIDER-MAN*. And I was hooked. For life. From that day forward, I spent all of my money on comics. And not just superhero comics. Any comics at all. Horror comics. Science Fiction comics. Even *ARCHIE* comics. And, of course, *CASPER* comics. I was a big fan of Casper and his seeming cohorts, Wendy and Hot Stuff. I say "seeming" because the three characters didn't actually have that much to do with each other. They had their own individual, and usually very short, adventures. Adventures that lasted a few pages and ended with a little joke. They were magical, charming tales but I soon graduated to longer stories, often with multi-issue story arcs.

So, when J.M. DeMatteis and I were talking some time ago about characters we'd love to get our hands on and Casper, Wendy, and Hot Stuff came up, I knew we'd hit on something great. J.M. and I came up with the idea of doing a (if not *the*) big Casper story, one that would include the two characters that seemed his perfect counterparts. If Casper was the wide-eyed innocent, then that would make Wendy a good-natured pragmatist, while Hot Stuff would be the trouble-maker who wasn't all bad but just couldn't help making a mess of things.

We wanted this to be on the level of *GHOSTBUSTERS*. A gigantic threat. And three heroes who, against all odds, stood up to unimaginable evil and stayed true to themselves and to each other. And, most important, we wanted it to be a comic book that any parent would be happy to hand over to their son or daughter (or, better yet, read it with them).

And thus *CASPER AND THE SPECTRALS* was born—and on his 60th anniversary, of all things. It's a privilege and honor to be working with writer Todd DeZago and artist Pedro Delgado. They've taken the story J.M. and I cooked up and made it even better than we imagined it could be. We're biased but we think this is the Best. Casper. Ever.

ENJOY!

Brendan Deneen
Ardden Entertainment LLC
NYC - October 2009

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